

Message Text

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FM AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 0537

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TAGS: CVIS, AR

SUBJECT: FORM FS-257

REF: STATE 256575

1. REFTEL INVITES OUR COMMENTS ON REVISIONS OF FORM FS-257A.

WE SUGGEST FOLLOWING:

A. ON SPANISH EDITION, IN ITEM ONE, DELETE WORD "PATERNO".
WE FIND MARRIED WOMEN OFTEN TAKE THIS LITERALLY AND INSERT
FATHER'S NAME INSTEAD OF HUSBAND'S NAME IN BOX. WORD "APELLIDO"
ALONE WILL PROPERLY INDICATE WHAT WE NEED, I.E., FATHER'S NAME
IF MAN OR UNMARRIED WOMAN AND NAME OF HUSBAND'S FATHER IF
MARRIED WOMAN.

B. ON SPANISH EDITION, IN ITEM ONE, DELETE WORDS "APELLIDO
MATRNO", WHICH MISPELLED ANYHOW. SPANISH SPEAKERS WHO NORMALLY
USE MOTHER'S NAME (OR NAME OF HUSBAND'S MOTHER) WITH FATHER'S NAME
(OR WITH NAME OF HUSBAND'S FATHER) WILL INCLUDE IT IN THE SPACE
LABELED "APELLIDO" ABOVE. AS ABOVE, WE FIND MARRIED WOMEN OFTEN
INSERT OWN MOTHER'S MAIDEN NAME HERE, WHICH COMPLETELY
IRRELEVANT.

C. WE DO NOT ENDORSE THE SUGGESTION IN REFTEL THAT ALL
PERSONS NAMED IN PASSPORT BE INCLUDED IN ONE VISA APPLICATION.
SEPARATE APPLICATIONS FACILITATE RETRIEVAL FROM FILES AND
OBTAIN NEED FOR POST TO PREPARE CROSS REFERENCE CARDS FOR
THOSE INCLUDED IN ANOTHER'S APPLICATION. INCLUDING SPACE
EVEN FOR MINOR CHILDREN (WITH BIRTH DATA) MAKES FORM TOO LONG
AND SPACE-WASTING FOR GREAT BULK OF APPLICANTS, WHO TRAVEL
ON SEPARATE PASSPORTS.

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2. REFTEL REPORTS THAT DECISION HAS BEEN MADE TO ABOLISH

FORM FS-257, APPARENTLY IN ORDER TO ECONOMIZE IN SUPPLY, STORAGE, SHIPMENT, ETC. WE HAVE FOUND FS-257 VERY USEFUL. ITS ELIMINATION WOULD SERIOUSLY HAMPER OUR NONIMMIGRANT VISA (NIV) ACTIVITY FOR FOLLOWING REASONS:

A. ELIMINATION OF FS-257 WOULD SLOW NIV AND IV FILING AND RETRIEVAL OF FS499 OPERATIONS AS FILE DRAWERS BECOME MORE TIGHTLY PACKED, AND WOULD EVENTUALLY REQUIRE ADDITIONAL PERSONNEL TO DO FILE ROOM ACTIVITY SUCH AS FILING, RETRIEVING AND NAMECHECKING. ABOUT HALF THE NIV APPLICATIONS IN OUR CARD FILE ARE FS-257, ONE

SHEET THICK. IF APPLICATIONS ARE TO BE THREE SHEETS THICK (FS-257A WHEN FOLDED FOR FILING) WE WOULD SOON REACH POINT WHERE WE HAVE FIFTY PERCENT MORE BULK IN FILE CABINETS. TIGHTLY FILLED FILE CABINETS WOULD BECOME INCREASINGLY SO, MAKING EVERY ACTIVITY IN THE FILE CABINET PHYSICALLY MORE DIFFICULT AND REQUIRING ADDITIONAL PERSONNEL (READ: "MUSCLES") TO HANDLE CARD FILES. (WE DO NOT EXPECT NOT ANTICIPATE CORRESPONDING RELIEF IN FORM OF ADDITIONAL FILE CABINETS OR REDUCTION IN TIME POSTS ARE REQUIRED TO RETAIN APPLICATIONS.)

B. CONTRARY TO DEPARTMENT'S BELIEF, USE ONLY FS-257A WOULD INCREASE EXPECT INCREASE TIME PERSONAL INTERVIEWS WOULD TAKE, AT LEAST AS FAST-MOVING POST LIKE BUENOS AIRES, WHERE, FOR LACK OF STAFF, MOST APPLICANTS RECEIVE BUT BRIEFEST OF INTERVIEWS ANYHOW. FIRST, FS-257A ASKS QUESTIONS OFTEN NOT ESSENTIAL TO INTERVIEW (EXAMPLE: WHO IS PAYING FOR TRIP?) WHICH INDUCE TIME-CONSUMING IRRELEVANT INQUIRIES ("I BOUGHT TICKET). BUT I USED MONEY MY HUSBAND GAVE ME. BUT MY CHILDREN WILL REIMBURSE ME ON ARRIVAL AS TRIP IS CHRISTMAS PRESENT FROM THEM. WHOM DO I PUT DOWN AS PAYING FOR TRIP?") REQUIRING TIME-CONSUMING CLARIFICATIONS BY STAFF. SECONDLY, BONAFIDES OF MANY APPLICANTS QUICKLY AND ACCURATELY DETERMINED BY ORAL QUESTIONING WITHOUT REFERENCE TO EXTRA QUESTIONS FS-257A HAS, WHICH QUESTIONS IT WOULD BE A WASTE OF THE CONSULAR OFFICER'S TIME TO WADE THROUGH FOR EVERY APPLICANT. (CONSULAR OFFICER CAN ALWAYS REQUIRE FS-257A IN QUESTIONABLE CASES.)

C. ADDITIONAL STAFF TIME WOULD BE NEEDED JUST TO HANDLE FS-257A, I.E., TO FOLD THEM FOR FILING, A TASK THAT TOOK US UP TO ONE MAN-HOUR PER DAY TO DO WHEN HALF THE APPLICATIONS WHERE FS-257, BUT WHICH WILL BE DOUBLED IF FS-257 NOT TO BE USED AT ALL.

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3. ACCORDINGLY, WE HEREBY ASK PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE FORM FS-257 LOCALLY AND TO CONTINUE USING IT IN APPROPRIATE CASES.

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